

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 COME-00 EB-08 SSM-03 IO-13 TRSE-00
OMB-01 AID-05 AGRE-00 FEAE-00 INT-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-07 /098 W
-----311922Z 124690 /46

R 311548Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2886
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSH TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 0403

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EWWT, LE
SUBJECT: CLOSING OF ILLEGAL PORTS

REF: BEIRUT 0368

1. AS INDICATED REFTTEL, THE ASF ANNOUNCED ON JAN 27 THAT IT HAD OCCUPIED THE FOLLOWING SMALL PORTS ALONG THE LEBANESE COAST: JIYE, KAFFAR ABEIDA, SALATA, DBAYE AND AQUAMARINA. ALSO ANNOUNCED AS OCCUPIED (BUT NOT REPORTED REFTTEL) WAS THE "FIFTH BASIN OF BEIRUT PORT," A PHALANGE LANDING SITE AT THE MOUTH OF THE BEIRUT RIVER. THE ASF MADE NO MENTION OF OTHER ILLICIT LANDING SITES, SUCH AS ST. PAUL'S BEACH AND TABARJA BEACH, OR OF JOUNIEH WHICH HAS BEEN THE MAIN PHALANGE PORT.

2. DATT VISITED DBAYE, AQUAMARINA, THE FIFTH BASIN, ST.
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PAUL'S BEACH AND TABARJA BEACH DURING THE AFTERNOON OF JAN 28. THERE WERE NO CARGO SHIPS AT ANY OF THESE LOCATIONS, AND LOCAL RESIDENTS CLAIMED ALL HAD BEEN CLOSED. TWO SYRIAN TANKS AND A SQUAD OF SOLDIERS WERE GUARDING AQUAMARINA. ANOTHER SYRIAN SQUAD WAS GUARDING THE LAND ENTRANCE TO THE FIFTH BASIN.

3. ACTIVITY AT JOUNIEH PORT SEEMED NORMAL. A LEBANESE NAVAL OFFICER STATIONED THERE SAID THAT SYRIAN SOLDIERS HAD NOT OCCUPIED JOUNIEH PORT AND THAT IT WAS AN OFFICIAL INSTALLATION WHICH WOULD REMAIN OPEN. HE BELIEVED THAT IN TWO MONTHS ONLY "SMALLER CARGO SHIPS" WOULD CALL AT JOUNIEH, WHILE ALL LARGE SHIPS WOULD GO TO BEIRUT. HE ADDED THAT LEBANESE MILITARY OFFICERS HAD PREVIOUSLY COLLECTED CUSTOMS DUTIES AT JOUNIEH, BUT THAT CIVILIAN AUTHORITIES WOULD DO SO IN THE FUTURE.

4. IN A CONVERSATION WITH DATT THE EVENING OF JAN 28, A SHELL OFFICIAL EXPRESSED GREAT SATISFACTION WITH THE AAF ACTION. HE EXPLAINED THE COMPANY WOULD NO LONGER NEED TO PAY A 40 PERCENT "WAR TAX" ON FUEL IMPORTED THROUGH ILLEGAL PORTS.

5. MEANWHILE, MINISTER OF FINANCE FARID RAPHEL IS REPORTEDLY STUDYING HOW TO DEAL WITH SHIPS WHICH HAD PLANNED TO UNLOAD WHISKEY AND CIGARETTES AT THE ILLEGAL PORTS. L'ORIENT-LE JOUR ON JAN 30 CITED SOURCES "CLOSE TO THE MINISTER" AS SAYING NORMAL IMPORT DUTIES WOULD BE LEVIED ON THE WHISKY; HOWEVER, AN "ARRANGEMENT" WOULD BE WORKED OUT FOR THE CIGARETTES, SINCE THE STATE'S TOBACCO MONOPOLY HAD NOT YET RESUMED OPERATION.
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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 31-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t1977014/aaaaaddf.tel
Line Count: 87
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Litigation Codes:
Litigation History: Hold (001 Tobacco) added on 4/16/2009 3:39:10 PM by WASHDCMcGoldRJ, Hold (001 Tobacco) removed on 4/16/2009 3:45:09 PM by WASHDCMcGoldRJ (Litigation Hold Lifted)
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